

October 10, 2018

To: FCC, Proceeding 18-197

Please deny the request by Sprint and T-Mobile to merge. This merger will further reduce the very limited competition that exists in the wireless phone and broadband markets. I live in an area with no cell, no cable and no DSL service. There are many similar areas across the country. The existing carriers have violated their commitment to provide coverage to all residents in return for their monopoly of access rights, spectrum and telecom infrastructure. Based on their track record, merging carriers will make this worse.

We need more choices and competition. If carriers want to consolidate their infrastructure in order to increase efficiency and reduce cost, then they should: 1) agree to be properly regulated, and 2) agree to stringent contractual terms that stipulate when they will extend coverage to all residents in their geographic regions, and the penalties for non-compliance. Cellular phone and data services are as critical today as electrical power. These services need to be available to all residents. 5G will make the situation worse in areas with weak, limited or no coverage.

In addition, the FCC needs to strengthen and enforce the broadband coverage rules so that current, accurate coverage is reported and available. The system reports that my census block had competitive coverage, while in fact no coverage exists. This situation is far too common.

<https://www.theverge.com/2018/9/24/17882842/us-internet-broadband-map-isp-fcc-wireless-competition>

I urge the FCC to ensure that the interests of the citizens, our economy, and our country are protected. Communication and the internet are driving forces for the U.S. and global economies. Letting carriers operate as a free market has a seductive appeal. However, the realities and critical nature of our communication infrastructure demands a careful balance of regulations and incentives. Please deny this counterproductive request to merge Sprint and T-Mobile. Instead, commit to a plan that provides competitive, cost effective coverage for all Americans.

Craig Chatterton
P.O. Box 73
Soquel CA 95073